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ABSTRACT

Described is a program develcped by the Research Division of NASPA starting in 1971 that planned more thoroughly for transfer students to the university. After an introduction to the problem and a profile of the contemporary transfer student, problems of program articulation, academic advising, admissions, and student services (including housing, financial aid, counseling and career development, orientation, and student life) are discussed. Recommendations for institutional action are included. (MSE)

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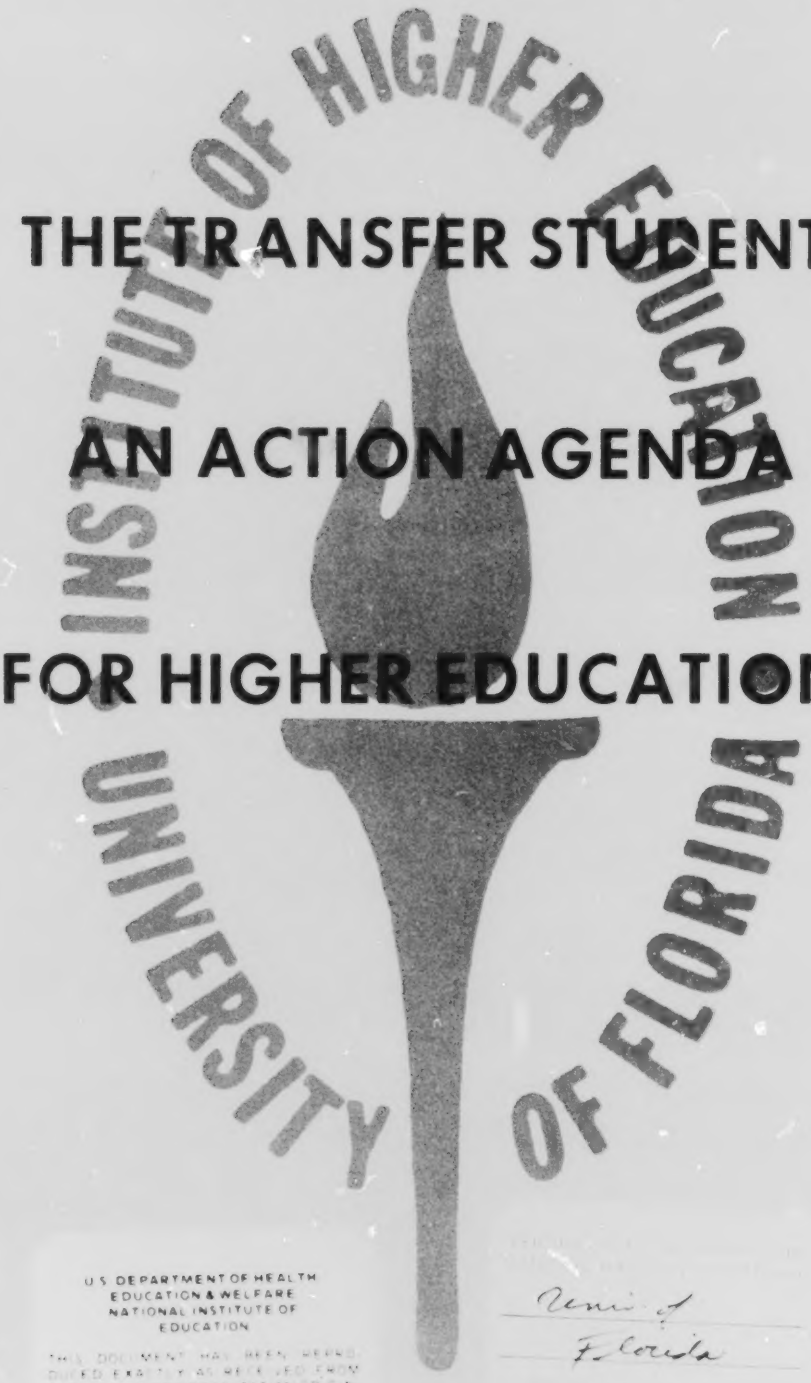
THE TRANSFER STUDENT:

AN ACTION AGENDA

FOR HIGHER EDUCATION



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THE TRANSFER STUDENT:

AN ACTION AGENDA FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

by

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Gainesville, Florida
September, 1976

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PREFACE

This monograph is the result of discussions that originally took place in 1971 in the Research Division of the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators. At that time, members of the Division felt that student personnel officers and others within higher education were not giving enough emphasis to programs for transfer students, despite the fact that transfer students were enrolling in large numbers, and that community colleges were growing very rapidly. The Research Division felt that if information about transfer students, the need for effective programs for them, and recommendations for specific action could be developed and published, then institutional leaders would be more likely to initiate action on their own campuses for transfer students.

Thus, a program was developed by the Research Division of NASPA in 1971, under the direction of Arthur Sandeen. The first part of this program was published in the April, 1971, issue of the NASPA Journal and it presented a summary of the pertinent research on transfer students. The second part of the project was an extensive study of programs for transfer students at NASPA member institutions, which number over 900. The results of this study were reported in the January, 1972, issue of the NASPA Journal. The study was jointly conducted by the authors. In the third part of the project, completed in early 1974, the authors presented specific recommendations for institutions regarding their

programs for transfer students. This report was published by NASPA and was distributed to the chief student personnel officers in over 1,000 institutions.

There has been a good deal of change in higher education and in programs and research concerning transfer students in the past few years. This monograph is an effort to update and consolidate the research, problems, and needs of transfer students. It is intended for use by student personnel administrators, academic deans, state planners, community college officials, graduate students in higher education, and others concerned about the success of transfer students.

The authors are indebted to the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators for offering the initial stimulus for the monograph and for its assistance in performing the studies of transfer students. The Institute of Higher Education is pleased to add this publication to the literature on articulation.

Gainesville, Florida
September, 1976

James L. Wattenbarger

CHAPTER I

Introduction to the Problem

Transfer students are an important part of American nigher education and merit special attention. In 1962, there were 592,000 students enrolled in 561 two-year colleges in the United States (U.S.O.E., 1973). Now, over a decade later, there are nearly 3,000,000 students enrolled in two-year colleges and the number of two-year colleges has doubled (Yearbook, 1974). During this time there has also been a dramatic increase in the number of students transferring from one institution of higher education to another. Despite the striking increase in first-time matriculants in recent years, transfers to four-year institutions have increased at twice the rate of entering freshmen. Many large state universities now admit over three to five thousand new transfer students per year, and it is not at all unusual for many colleges, large and small, public and private, to enroll as many as one-half of their new students each year as transfers. New institutions called "upper division universities" composed only of juniors, seniors, and graduate students are now quite common.

This significant increase in both community college students and in the number of students transferring from one institution to another has caused some special student problems that deserve attention. In their book, From Junior to Senior College: A National Study of the Transfer Student, Dorothy Knoell and Leland Medsker (1965) state in the final chapter on Conclusions and Implications the following:

> In many four-year institutions, transfer students are being over-looked in planning orientation programs, in offering counseling services to new students, in inviting their participation in social and extra-curricular activities, and, above all, in giving appropriate academic advice at the time of their first registration. There was little or no evidence of discriminatory policies or practices affecting the junior college transfer students, but compared with the attention given the entering freshmen, there was a general lack of concern for their needs and interests. The new freshmen continues to be the preferred client of the four-year institutions, and of their student services program, while the transfer student is usually left to make his own adjustment to the new situation. (p. 97)

It is worthwhile to point out that this national study involved 10,000 students, 345 two-year institutions which these students entered as freshmen, and a diverse group of 43 senior colleges and universities to which the students transferred. Although the transfer student has been a part of American institutions of higher learning for many years, he/she is too often not the preferred student; but as Frederick Kintzer (1973) said, the transfer student may often be the "middle man" in higher education. Frequently, programs at colleges and universities (from admissions, articulation, counseling and academic advising to orientation, student activities, financial aid, and placement) ignore or do not give sufficient emphasis to the special needs of transfer students.

In the last ten years there has been increased attention directed towards the needs of transfer students. Although a considerable body of research exists concerning these students, most of it has focused on three areas: 1) academic success of the transfer student; 2) articulation problems; and 3) descriptions of the junior college student. In addition to the Knoell

and Medsker study, K. Patricia Cross' study on the Junior College Student: A Research Description (1968) is a notable example of outstanding work that has contributed to the current knowledge about programs for transfer students. The National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (1971) commissioned a study, through its Research Division, of student personnel programs for transfer students. That project involved several hundred institutions and was conducted by the authors. A significant advance was made in December, 1973, with the Airlie House Conference on College Transfer sponsored by the Association Transfer Group and funded by that organization, the Carnegie Corporation, the Exxon Foundation, and the Federal Inter-Agency Committee on Education (Airlie House, 1973). Those persons invited as participants considered a number of questions that related to the needs of transfer students. The central issue discussed at that conference was "How can policies and practices of post-secondary education be modified so as to better accomodate the needs of increasing numbers of students transferring from one institution to another?" The several professional educational associations represented at this conference are now planning to bring the content of those discussions to the attention of their various memberships.

There are now several "types" of transfer students, and the following description developed by Willingham (1974) is helpful in gaining a better understanding of them:

1. The articulated Vertical Transfer -- students who transfer from a two-year college to a four-year college or university. This represents the largest group of transfers.

2. Traditional Horizontal Transfer -- students who transfer from one four-year college to another four-year college. At one time, this form of transfer accounted for essentially all movement of undergraduate students among institutions. It still represents one-fourth of the total.
3. Non-Traditional Transfer -- students who transfer from innovative programs to other colleges and people who have been out of college for a long time.
4. Reverse Transfer -- students who transfer from a four-year college to a two-year college.
5. Open-Door transfer -- students who transfer from a two-year college to another two-year college.
6. Double Reverse Transfer -- students who transfer from a four-year college to a two-year college and then back to a four-year college.
7. Vocational Transfer -- students who transfer from some type of vocational school or program to a four-year college.

It has now been several years since the publication of the Knoell and Medsker study, and the Cross report. Significant problems still exist at institutions for transfer students. This publication identifies problems that are encountered by transfer students and offers recommendations for institutional solutions of those problems. Following is a brief presentation of some of these problems which are addressed in detail in later chapters.

Transfer Student Problems

1. Attitudes Toward Transfer Students

One of the fundamental problems that can inhibit effective institutional programs for transfer students is the attitude of its faculty, administration, and native students toward transfer students. If the institution feels that transfer students are "second class citizens," it may have a difficult time establishing an effective climate for transfer.

2. Admissions

In some institutions admissions criteria may discriminate against the transfer students. For example, different grade point averages may be required for admission from different institutions and repetitive aptitude and/or achievement testing may be required. Even after admission, extensive placement testing may still be demanded. Often admissions officers do not recognize the need for specialists in credit evaluation, and as a result some transfer students do not receive an evaluation of previously earned credits until after initial academic planning sessions.

Applications for admission often request unneeded information or items which may have little bearing on the student's ability to succeed at the receiving institution. Continuing relationships between admissions counselors and registrars at cooperating institutions may be lacking.

3. New Student Programs

Although some progress has been made in the past few years in providing special orientation programs for new transfer students, many institutions still give first priority to new freshmen. Because of more varied academic backgrounds, different social expectations, and work schedules, transfers may be unable or unwilling to participate in "regular" new student programs. Particularly evident is the fact that orientation programs for transfer students may fail to address the pragmatic questions these prospective students often have: course selection, evaluation of academic credit, housing, and financial aid opportunities.

4. Registration

Transfer students enroll throughout the academic year, not just in the fall, yet at many institutions late enrollment involves serious penalties. Many courses and even entire programs may be "closed." Transfer students need this information before they arrive on campus.

5. Academic Advising

There is no more crucial problem than academic advising for the transfer student. If a careful assessment of previous academic work is not completed before the student enrolls at the new institution, and if there has not been effective communication regarding that student's program between the two institutions, the transfer student is likely to encounter serious academic problems, and loss of time in reaching a graduation goal.

6. Student Financial Aid

Some student financial aid programs are not available on an equal basis to transfer students because of the priority given to incoming freshmen. Scholarships are often available only to new freshmen students despite the fact that transfer students may comprise half of the new students at the institution. Many transfer students may not qualify for financial aid programs because their date of acceptance does not conform to traditional financial aid deadlines. Sufficient information about financial aid may not be provided prior to transfer. There also may be some confusion about the possibility of continuing loan and grant programs from one institution to another.

7. Housing

Many institutions, in their on-campus housing policies, give first priority to new freshmen. In the process transfer students may receive the least attractive housing, or none at all. Again, because they may apply late, they may not have an equal chance to live on campus and become an active part of student life. Student assistants and residence hall advisory staff may not be aware of the background and special needs of transfers, many of whom have never lived in an on-campus housing setting previously. Where many or most transfer students may live off-campus, sufficient information about off-campus living may not be provided.

8. Student Activities

Some transfer students complain that they do not feel actively involved in the social, political and recreational life

of the institution. Moreover, some transfers feel that because of their late entry they cannot compete with the native students for traditional campus leadership positions.

9. Career Planning and Placement

Many transfers are not certain of an academic major. Career exploration opportunities for transfers may either be lacking or non-existent. Recruiters are seldom aware of the diversity of backgrounds and attitudes of transfer students.

10. Publications

Most publications, whether college catalogs, student handbooks, financial aid brochures, or descriptions of individual academic programs do not address the problems of transfer students. Although there may be a large number of transfer students on the campus, the publications may not reflect this.

11. Adjustment to Institutional Change

Some two-year colleges are more flexible in their academic programs than are their four-year counterparts, and of course the opposite is true as well. When a student enters an institution that is significantly different from his previous one, adjustment difficulties may occur. The new institution should be aware of the academic and extracurricular program of the previous institution and make efforts to assist students in these changes.

12. Articulation Office

Very few institutions have specific staff members in academic or student affairs whose primary duty is to help meet the needs of

transfer students through the development of policies and programs for them. The absence of such an office or designated staff may hinder the success of transfer students.

13. Articulation Agreements

Too often transfer students become the victims of the lack of cooperation between and among various institutions. Where there have not been specific written agreements among institutions, transfer students can often be subject to arbitrary decisions made by admissions officers, faculty, and other officials.

14. Special Academic Opportunities

Independent study, honors programs, and overseas study opportunities may not be as available to transfer students as they are to native students.

15. Participation in Institutional Governance

Transfer students may not have sufficient opportunity to participate on a regular basis on councils, committees, and task forces because of their later arrival on campus. If spaces are not allocated for transfer students, they may seldom be placed on committees or councils which deliberate issues of concern to them.

16. Recognition and Awards

Most institutions present awards to certain graduates and other outstanding students for various academic and extracurricular accomplishments. Too many institutions do not recognize the merit of transfer student accomplishments at their previous institutions as part of their overall personal records.

17. The Reverse Transfer

Another facet of the articulation problem between two and four year institutions is the "reverse transfer" -- the student who transfers from a four-year institution to a two-year school. Many transfer because of academic problems, while others do so because of a lack of personalization on the four-year campus.

18. Research

Despite some significant efforts in recent years to learn more about transfer students, most institutions have not studied their own transfer students. There is evidence to indicate that there are significant differences in socio-economic background, academic performance, and professional aspirations between transfer students and native students. Institutions could benefit significantly by paying close attention to this data.

The next chapter is addressed to a specific discussion of transfer students themselves.

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CHAPTER II

Transfer Students: A Contemporary Description

Remarkable as it may seem, many institutions do not study their own students in any systematic manner. Faculty, administrators, and board members, for the most part, rely on their own hunches, observations, personal experiences and memories for information about students which, either conscieously or unconscieously, serve as a basis for curriculum planning, the development of services, and other educational programs. Despite significant changes in the overall student population in recent years, too many institutions have not made corresponding adjustments in their educational programs. Too often, all students are assumed to be receptive to the same teaching styles, time schedules, and curriculum content. Many times, educational programs represent the needs of the faculty more than the actual needs and abilities of the students.

It is very important for colleges and universities to know their students -- their educational and social backgrounds, their personal and professional aspirations, their perceptions of the college itself, their attitudes and values related to the institution's program, their extracurricular interests and needs, their living styles, and their financial needs. This need to know is not a meddling concern, reflective of an "in loco parentis" relationship with students. It is knowledge that is essential for the institution to seek out in its efforts to develop effective educational programs for its students. Through such

efforts, an institution can also learn the extent to which its students are changing, and if the "kinds" of students it is attracting are consistent with the students it is seeking. Once an institution has regular and reliable data about its students, it can do a more effective job of counseling with its own students, and of providing information and insights to prospective students, parents, legislators, board members, and officials at other schools.

Quantitative assessments of students should be supplemented by qualitative data. Although this information is difficult to collect and to evaluate, the personal experiences of students need to be studied. These extracurricular experiences have a major impact upon the quality of educational programs and to ignore such matters or to scorn them as merely "frivolous activities" is to limit the effectiveness of the college's impact.

That some colleges and universities do not study their own students in any systematic manner is ironic in that there are so many excellent research tools now available for this purpose. No claim is being made here that there is now a precise "science of student ecology" available but institutions can learn a great deal about their students if they will take the initiative.

But why study transfer students? If one accepts the notion that institutions should assess the characteristics of students on a regular basis in order to develop better educational programs, one discovers quite early in the process that there are significant differences among students within an institution. With the increasing numbers and

diversity of students currently enrolled, it is very hazardous to speak about all students with much meaning. Each campus has many "groups" of students whose special characteristics and needs should be known and described, so that they are not "short-changed" in the educational process. Transfer students are one of the most important and fastest growing segments of higher education. Despite the striking increases in first time matriculants in recent years, transfers to four-year institutions have increased at twice the rate of new freshmen (Sandeen and Goodale, 1971).

The national system of higher education is now moving from the provision of mass learning opportunities to universal access. The Carnegie Commission (1971) has noted this fact, and has suggested that the current enrollment of 10.2 million students will expand to 13.5 million in 1980, and to 17.4 million by 2000. An important change has taken place already however in the concept of the term "student" and this change will continue. Students have previously been thought of largely as in the 18-22 year old range who are spending full-time being students. There are now very large numbers of citizens who are only incidentally students -- they hold full time jobs, they are older and are not interested in completing a degree program, or they enter and "step-out" of the educational system as they please. Whereas part-time students have always been a part of higher education, they are increasingly becoming the dominant group. Such terms as "full-time equivalent" students no longer have much meaning for many institutions, since only a minority of their enrollees are engaged

full-time in a student role. With so many options available now and in the future, students are going to exhibit even more diversity in characteristics, learning styles, enrollment patterns, and educational goals. For institutions not to pay close attention to this unmistakeable trend will not only impair their educational programs, but may also affect their ability to survive.

Transfer students often fit the descriptions of some of these "new" matriculants, as will be indicated later in the chapter. Undergraduate students have moved from one institution to another for many years, but now with over two million students in the community colleges, transfer students are no longer an "insignificant minority" on most four-year campuses. Many institutions now actively recruit transfers, in the same manner as they previously have incoming freshmen. Some colleges and universities now award over one-half of their bachelor's degrees to students who started college somewhere else, and there are now several new "upper-division" undergraduate institutions that enroll only juniors and seniors. Transfers, even though they are already numerous have not been the "preferred student" in higher education -- they sometimes have been in an educational "middleman's" (Kintzer, 1973) role. Thus it is even more important for institutions to study their transfer students, in order to develop programs both in and out of the classroom that meet their needs.

In this chapter, descriptions of transfer students, their characteristics, backgrounds, aspirations, campus experiences, and

academic performance are presented. Emphasis is given to information about transfer students that has implications for educational planning and student services programs.

Academic Characteristics and Performance

The academic ability of students is one of the best researched areas of higher education. Many institutions require and receive test results relating to academic aptitude, and there have been national norms available on these tests, of course, for many years. Most of the tests in use are measures of traditional academic aptitude and achievement, and thus may not be equally relevant to the educational programs at all institutions. There have been a large number of studies in this area, and virtually all of them indicate that the mean scores for students attending four-year colleges exceed those of students in two-year colleges, and that two-year college students score higher as a group than do high school graduates who do not go on to college (Cross, 1968). In one very large study, involving 14 measures of ability -- ranging from reading comprehension, mathematics ability, and biology to vocabulary information, creativity, and abstract reasoning -- the junior college group fell between four-year college and non-college groups (Cooley and Becker, 1966). Not all transfer students have attended a community college of course, since many of them move from one four-year institution to another. Furthermore, there are large numbers of students in the community colleges who not only do not transfer to a four-year school, but have no aspirations or intentions of doing so. Some states, such as California, essentially

guarantee that students who transfer to the state's four-year universities from the community colleges will be from the lower ranges of academic aptitude. In California, only high school graduates ranking in the top one-third of their classes may enter the state's four-year colleges and universities as freshmen; others enter the community colleges. In a study illustrative of the results in this area, Walker (1969) found that transfer students at the University of Florida scored significantly lower on a measure of academic aptitude than did native students. This was true not only for the transfers from the community colleges, but also for the transfers from other four-year institutions.

Although there are significant exceptions, the evidence is clear that transfer students have lower mean scores than native students on traditional measures of academic aptitude. It is not surprising then to learn that the academic performance of transfer students, as measured by traditional methods, is lower than that of native students. As has been noted in many studies (Knoell and Medsker, 1965), there is a tendency for the first term grades of transfer students to drop below their cumulative junior college averages. The grades of most transfer students improve over the period of two years which they spend in junior college, decline in the first term after transfer, and then improve in successive terms (at least for those students who persist to graduation). Knoell and Medsker also point out that transfer students with very high academic ability do not experience a serious handicap in competing with native students for grades which would

qualify them for admission to graduate school. A few high ability transfer students experience a drop in grades initially, but most improve after one semester. This first semester "transfer shock" has been well known for some time on most four-year campuses. Despite first semester adjustment problems, transfer students have evidenced a good record of persistence to graduation at most institutions.

It needs to be emphasized again that measures of academic aptitude and achievement, in most cases, have been based on traditional methods. In the growing diversity of higher education, there are many institutions, most notably the community colleges, that are engaging in new and non-traditional methods of academic assessment. Thus, some transfer students who may appear to be less "bright" or to have lower mean scores on "achievement" tests may be short changed by the process, since they have been matriculating in a non-traditional system. Moreover, many of the students who enter the community colleges are older than their four-year college colleagues and are much more likely to be engaged only part-time in their studies. Academic measures of a traditional type do not fit these students very well.

In addition to the search for new methods of academic assessment, there is a need for institutions to investigate other kinds of student achievement. Because higher education now includes more than the traditional academic program, any meaningful evolution of aptitude and performance must reflect this broader framework.

Aspirations of Transfer Students

Even though there is a good deal of evidence (e.g., Panos and Astin, 1967) that educational aspirations of both junior and senior college students are unrealistically high, there are significant differences between the educational aspirations of transfer students and native students. Generally speaking, students who transfer to four-year institutions from the community colleges have lower educational aspirations than native students. For example, in a study done for the American Council on Education, Astin (1967) found that 30 percent of junior college students aspired to education beyond the bachelor's degree, while 55 percent of four-year college students aspired to that level. Despite these high aspirations, it should be noted that in a longitudinal study (Trent and Ruyle, 1965), it was found that only about 10 percent of those who began their college careers in junior colleges had obtained their bachelor's degree 4 years later, compared with 27 percent for state college entrants, 36 percent for those entering the universities, and 49 percent for those entering private colleges and universities. Of course, it is no longer the norm for college students to progress through their undergraduate programs in a traditional, orderly fashion. In many institutions, the average length of time taken by students for the bachelor's degree is closer to five years than four.

Educational aspirations usually are closely related to socioeconomic background, parental expectations, and self concept of ability (Sandeen, 1965). Many college students have regretted their weak

academic backgrounds. This poor preparation was due in many cases to uninformed course selection or to an inadequate awareness of future academic demands and requirements. The need for effective counseling for students in high school in this regard is crucial. Transfer students may have even greater needs than native students, since they spend less time at each institution.

The overall situation is similar when occupationsl aspirations are reviewed. Cross (1968) reports that while 64 percent of students enrolled in junior colleges aspire to managerial and professional occupations, 89 percent of students at four-year institutions do so. These figures are closely related to the status of the father, and are another indication of the need for effective counseling throughout the school system. The current national emphasis upon "career education," if delivered effectively at all levels, may go a long way in helping students become aware of opportunities previously unknown to them. It also might assist them in making realistic decisions regarding their own future. Sometimes transfer students do not receive the kind of information that is crucial to their academic and career planning since they may become "lost in the shuffle" between institutions. In the process, their programs may be delayed or confused and the students may drop out or adjust their "aspirations" downward in a sense of frustration.

Students who transfer to four-year colleges from the community colleges usually have been influenced more by practical considerations in their selection of a college than have native students at the four-year college. Academic reputation is the most common reason for

the selection of a university, whereas low cost and closeness to home frequently are the main reasons given for attending a community college (Cross, 1968). This vocational, practical orientation to college is likely to be evidenced by many transfer students since they may view the college primarily as another stepping stone on their way to a better job. Transfer students, as a result, may identify with the four-year institution less strongly than the native students, may become less involved in student life and activities, and may feel less loyalty after graduation. If the four-year institution desires to provide more opportunities for transfer students to become involved in campus life, it must demonstrate that transfers are an integral part of the student body by recognizing their special needs and backgrounds.

It is well known, of course, that undergraduate students often have a difficult time selecting their major academic field of study. Many four-year colleges and universities report that over 50 percent of their undergraduates change their academic majors at least once during the four-year period. Knoell and Medsker (1965) found that 25 percent of students transferring to four-year colleges had not committed themselves to an academic major at the time they completed their work at their previous institution. Another 25 percent had already changed their major before transferring, and almost one out of five changed their major after transferring to a four-year college. The implications for career planning and counseling programs are clear. Transfer students, who spend less actual time at each institution than native students, have a critical

need for thoughtful, accurate, and timely advice from faculty regarding their choice of academic majors. Unfortunately, many transfer students do not find this kind of service to be as effective as they would like on many campuses, and this results in considerable frustration and wasted time and effort.

Socio-Economic Background

Virtually all of the studies in this area (e.g., Astin, 1967) indicate a rank ordering of types of college on the basis of student socio-economic background variables such as father's occupation, income, and education. For example, 64 percent of students entering four-year private universities reported that their fathers had been to college, while the corresponding figure for the two-year college students was 34 percent (Astin, 1967). Similar differences exist with regard to family income. Many students who transfer to four-year colleges from the community colleges experience financial difficulties. Knoell and Medsker (1965) report that transfer students are more likely to be self supporting during college than native students. Nearly 20 percent of the male transfer students in this study reported that they paid nearly all their college costs out of their own earnings, compared with only 8 percent of the native students. Many new transfers are now aware of the "transfer shock" phenomenon regarding academic performance, and, as a result, some of them feel that employment might seriously interfere with their university studies. Transfer students usually spend much less time in employment after transfer than before. This, of course, can

contribute to their strained economic plight. The increased costs of the four-year institution have often been listed by transfer students as their most difficult problem. At times, transfer students receive inadequate information about the actual costs of their new institution or have unrealistic personal expectations of what those costs might be. The most frequent reason given by transfer students for dropping out of college is financial. Many of these students simply do not have enough money, but there are others who would have continued in school if they had received sensitive and timely advice from their community college staff. Moreover, there are additional transfer students who are disappointed to learn that at their new institution they may not have a very good chance of securing financial aid. Some transfer students find themselves in a kind of "Catch 22" situation -- the grade point average differential suffered by most of them is a major deterrent to financial solvency -- it is difficult for them to qualify for financial aid after such an academic drop, and they are afraid of the drop to the point that they feel compelled to give up their part-time jobs (Knoell and Medsker, 1969).

It is obvious that most transfer students come from socio-economic backgrounds that are different from the majority of native students at four-year institutions. This is not just a simple fact that has no implications for these students or the institutions they attend. Unless careful attention and effort are directed to meeting their needs, these students may be greatly frustrated by their experiences after transfer, and may not attain their educational goals.

Extracurricular Experiences

Although the extracurricular experiences of undergraduates are sometimes considered irrelevant to the educational mission of an institution, student life at any college may be a major influence on both individual student attitudes and on the general climate for learning. Frederick Rudolph (1966) has argued that "the most sensitive barometer of what is going on at a college is the extracurriculum. It is the agency that identifies student enthusiasms, their understanding of what a college should be, and their preferences. It reveals their attitude toward the course of study, and it records the demands of the curriculum, or the lack thereof." (p. 53).

Faculty do not have to become "drinking companions" of students, and neither the students nor the faculty want this anyway. However, if student "life" on the campus is not understood and acknowledged by faculty, then the gap between students and the institution will increase. Faculty can demonstrate their support for out-of-class social and educational programs with their participation, recognition and advice. Undergraduate life at many institutions today is a lonely, impersonal affair, but if students feel that they are useful participants in the college's program and that others care about them as persons, the likelihood that they will stay in school will increase. The "student morale" of a campus is probably impossible to measure, but it is real, and is clearly different from one campus to another. It can have a considerable impact upon the success of the institution.

The extracurricular life of a campus may be viewed very differently by transfer students. Too often, they are treated as new freshmen by the institution, and are given no special consideration in various out of class programs. Since they may be enrolled for only two years at their new institition, they may be reluctant to get involved in campus activities, fraternities and sororities, student publications, and student cultural productions. Moreover they may be placed in a disadvantageous position by native students who control access to such programs and have spent two to three years working their way up to leadership positions. It is not surprising to learn that in Knoell and Medsker's study (1965), it was found that transfer students who had been student leaders at their previous institutions became almost totally inactive after transfer. Moreover, the transfers tended to have much less identity with the four-year college than did their native student classmates.

It is not being suggested here that the institution revert to an In loco parentis relationship with its transfer students, so that they do not become dissatisfied with college. To the contrary, institutions should treat transfer students as the adults they are, recognize that an important part of their educational experience is outside the classroom, and realize that efforts need to be made to insure that real opportunities are available there for them. In this manner, the institution can improve its climate for learning, make the undergraduate experience more meaningful for its transfer students, and enhance the attractiveness of the institution to future applicants.

Transfer students may be the last students assigned to on-campus housing, as freshmen are given preference. Although many transfers do not want to live on campus, many do, and some feel that they are the lowest priority the institution has. One way a college can enhance real involvement in campus life for its new transfers is to assign them to on-campus housing. It obviously increases the possibility of making many new friends and of becoming active in extracurricular programs. On some campuses, however, transfers are only able to get assigned to on-campus housing after all the freshmen are assigned. The perception on the part of so many new transfer students that they are not the "preferred" new students at the institution is thus reinforced.

Institutions can give special recognition to transfer students for their academic and out of class achievements at campus banquets, social occasions, athletic events, and graduation ceremonies. Such recognition as "the outstanding two-year scholar graduate" can go a long way in enhancing the climate for transfer students at the four-year campus. There are far too few opportunities for all students on campuses today to have their efforts acknowledged by others, and most students (and their parents) respond to such occasions with enthusiasm and pride.

Too often, transfer students get an idea of what out-of-class life is going to be like in "orientation" programs that are designed almost entirely for freshmen. Although new transfer students have many of the same needs in orientation as freshmen do, most transfers feel strongly that it is an insult to them to be identified with new freshmen. An institution ought to recognize such a realistic factor, and

develop special programs in orientation for its transfer students. This is an area where already enrolled transfer students can find a significant area of campus involvement by assisting in the orientation process for new transfer students. Clearly, the most effective and credible communicators to new students are already enrolled students. Many institutions which have hired experienced transfer students, and provided them with good training, supervision, and renumeration, have found that they can greatly improve these orientation programs. This can go a long way in creating a positive campus experience for transfer students and making them feel like they are a welcome part of their new college or university.

The "New" Students

Many transfer students, especially those from the two-year colleges, fit the description Cross (1972) gives to the "new" students in higher education. This new clientele consists of students who simply have not been part of higher education before, and they present a real challenge to many institutions. Since many of these students have not been high academic achievers, some institutions may fear that they will have to "lower their standards" to accommodate them. College level work does not always have to mean higher and higher levels of abstraction -- it might well mean higher and higher standards of performance. As Cross (1973) suggests, the presence of the "new" students should encourage colleges and universities to begin with the student and help move him/her toward the development of his/her abilities. It does not

suggest that institutions should try to make the student into a carbon copy of the academically elite leader of bygone days. These students, for the most part, are not in college to become professional scholars but to gain a better job and a better life. In California, some 80 percent of the state's high school graduates continue into post-secondary education. As this trend continues and spreads throughout the country, the impact upon institutions and their programs will be considerable. A large number of these students will become transfer students, of course, and their special educational needs must be met.

Many of these "new" students may have rather low opinions of themselves as academic learners, and if they perceive that the institution views them somehow as "second-class citizens" it is unlikely that they will realize much success. The "disadvantaged" label given to many of these students has been both an insult and a "predisposition" to failure for some of them. Most institutions that have made serious efforts to work with these "new" students have rethought their own values and objectives as they have become more sensitive to the human needs of the students.

Need for Study

There are a number of very helpful research instruments available to institutions that can be of considerable assistance in understanding transfer students and in planning new educational and extracurricular programs.

Perhaps the most important first step in this process is to obtain a good description of who the transfer students are. The American College

Testing Program's Class Profile Service (ACT, 1974) is one useful and easy to administer instrument for this purpose. It includes information about students' academic abilities, goals and aspirations, selected needs relevant to student personnel services, students' out of class accomplishments, and demographic characteristics. This instrument, if administered each year to new transfer students, can indicate important changes and trends in this student population. It can be of assistance in recruitment, admissions, instructional planning, and student counseling.

The College Student Questionnaire (E.T.S., 1965) includes sections that indicate the educational and vocational plans of students, their college activities, and attitudes. It also has eleven scales, among which are measures of their satisfaction with faculty, their degree of extracurricular involvement, family and peer independence, and cultural sophistication. This information about transfer students can be compared with other institutions using the same instrument. The C.S.Q. also includes a "subcultural typolcopy" of students, based upon the degree to which students at the college identify with the institution and the extent of their involvement with ideas. Students are thus classified into vocational, academic, collegiate, and non-conformist "subcultures." This information can be of considerable interest to an institution, since it strives to understand differences between its native and transfer students and seeks more effective ways of planning educational programs for them.

The Institutional Functioning Inventory (E.T.S., 1972) can help institutions better understand their strengths and weaknesses. It helps

to show how faculty, students, administrators, and other constituent groups perceive teaching practices, government arrangements, administrative policies, types of programs, and attitudes of various campus groups. There are increasing differences among groups of students on the I.F.I., thus the responses of transfer students could reveal important information about now well the institution is serving them.

Previously in this chapter, reference was made to the feelings of some transfer students that they were not as much a part of the institution as they would like to be. The College and University Environment Scales (E.T.S., 1966) is designed to describe the institutional climate of a campus through the perceptions of its students and can provide valuable data about transfer students. The five scales are practicality, community, awareness, propriety, and scholarship. The profile of the campus environment provided by the C.U.E.S. can be a valuable tool in understanding the climate for learning and comparing, for example, native and transfer student perceptions.

As the diversity of students continues to increase, and more students transfer from one institution to another, colleges should assess their students carefully on a regular basis. The process is not burdensome; there are a number of excellent research instruments available and the results can go a long way in helping colleges plan more effective educational programs and in understanding their students more completely.

Summary

Transfer students constitute an extremely important part of higher education, yet too many four-year colleges and universities do not direct

as much attention to them and their needs as they should. The incoming freshmen or "native" student is still the "preferred student" in higher education, and the transfer student may be caught in the position of "middleman."

Transfer students are likely to have lower mean scores on traditional measures of academic aptitude and achievement than native students, although after their first semester after transfer, they usually perform quite well in their academic work. They are more likely to come from lower socio-economic backgrounds than native students and to have lower educational and vocational aspirations. The extracurricular experiences of many transfer students indicate that they are less involved in student activities than native students, despite the fact that some of them desire to be active and were active at their previous institutions. Some transfer students may be part of a "new" student clientele that has not been part of higher education before -- students who may need special help to succeed in their programs and who view college simply as a means to a better life and a better job.

It is important for colleges to know their transfer students well -- their academic backgrounds, demographic characteristics, aspirations, perceptions of the college, and attitudes toward the educational program. There are good research tools now available to assist colleges to learn more about their transfer students.

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CHAPTER III

Articulation

Articulation is an attempt to establish cooperative working relationships, communication, and agreements between educational institutions so that students can make a satisfactory transition from one school to another. Institutions of higher education have traditionally had close and frequent contacts with secondary schools because most of their new students entered as freshmen. Since the attention of senior institutions has been at the secondary level for so long, it has been difficult for many of them to adjust their priorities and procedures to include large numbers of transfer students. In some institutions, even though there are now more new transfer students than there are new freshmen, the primary focus of articulation is still with the high schools. Lack of effective articulation can result in serious problems for transfer students in academic matters, advising, finances, and housing, and can result in poor public relations, wasted time and money, and resentment for the institutions and the public.

Although there has been significant progress made in the past few years in establishing effective articulation agreements among institutions, considerable work remains to be done. The American Council on Education (1966) completed a valuable study in which it recommended guidelines for improving articulation between junior and senior colleges.

A large number of articulation conferences have been held in the states since that time, and new agreements have been made that have helped many transfer students make a smooth transition from one institution to another. Officials in senior institutions have become much more knowledgeable about programs in the community colleges, and there are now legislatively supported guarantees in some states that community college credits will be accepted in the state's senior institutions. Articulation is much more likely to be formalized between four-year state colleges and two-year state colleges than it is among four-year institutions themselves. There are significant numbers of students that transfer from one four-year college to another both public and private, and articulation among such institutions is not as extensive as it should be.

Although some progress has been made since the American Council on Education Study (1966) Frederick Kintzer (1973) argues that many important issues remain unresolved:

1. Admissions - To what extent should the public four-year colleges and universities maintain an open-door admissions policy for transfer students? Should all community college students who have completed an Associate degree be admitted to the senior college? In upper division academic programs that have numerical quotas, what is a fair method of evaluation of native students and transfer students concerning admission?
2. Evaluation of Courses - Who should have the final authority to evaluate courses taken at the sending institution before

they are accepted for transfer? On what basis should this be done? What about the evaluation of non-traditional educational experiences as part of articulation agreements? Should grades of less than "C" transfer?

3. Curriculum Planning - Do formalized articulation agreements hinder attempts at curriculum change? What happens to students who transfer during a time of curriculum change? What steps can be taken to avoid a loss of time and credit on the part of community college students who transfer when there are major organization changes in the college which affect the curriculum?

4. Academic Advising and Other Student Services - What steps can be initiated that will prevent untimely and inadequate academic advising during the transfer process? What can be done to improve articulation among institutions in orientation, financial aid, housing, and student activities?

5. Formal Articulation Programs - Do articulation programs have to be legally mandated to be effective or can they work well when they are voluntary in nature? How can students be protected from arbitrary decisions of faculty and academic departments in the evaluation of academic credits without formal articulation agreements? Can political and financial considerations be kept out of articulation agreements?

Articulation is essential if effective transition is going to take place for students who want to transfer from one institution to

another. Often, strong administrative leadership is needed to implement articulation agreements since there may be strenuous faculty resistance and "foot dragging." In some cases, boards of trustees and even legislatures participate in the process to insure that students may move freely and effectively within a state system without penalty.

Articulation agreements do not mean that all courses, programs, and teaching methods have to become uniform or that the academic quality of senior institutions has to be lowered. There needs to be a commitment on the part of the institutional leadership to the transferring student, so that the student does not lose time, money, or academic credit in the process. Procedures and policies need to be defined and made readily available to prospective transfer students. Some institutions have found it very helpful to publish a "transfer student handbook," and distribute it to faculty, advisors, sending institutions, parents, and students. A comprehensive handbook including academic and student services information and policies can help to avoid some problems that transfer students encounter.

The development of counseling and advising manuals, prepared by the receiving institutions, to aid personnel at the sending institutions can be very helpful. Specific information regarding parallel courses between sending and receiving institutions can be provided which will be useful in helping prospective students. Other information about the transfer process can be included in the manual, which is specifically designed for that sending institution. These publications need to be up-dated yearly and can be one of the most useful components of the articulation process.

In urban centers, particularly where large numbers of students attend community colleges, public service announcements on television and radio can be useful ways for senior institutions to explain their academic programs to transfer students. Emphasis can be placed upon financial aid opportunities as well, and if effective articulation agreements exist, students can be informed about specific academic programs and what is needed for admission.

Some institutions have offices specifically designed to deal with transfer student affairs and articulation. Such an office can give leadership and regular attention to the needs and problems of transfer students. Some of the functions of the "office of transfer student affairs and articulation" would be the following:

1. Establish liaison with academic deans and department heads concerning coordination of academic programs with the community colleges.
2. Conduct studies and research on transfer students and provide feedback to sending institutions and to local academic and student services department.
3. Organize and conduct workshops on transfer student problems and programs.
4. Develop and publish informational materials and brochures pertaining to transfer student affairs.
5. Participate in local, regional, and national conferences on transfer student concerns.

6. Recommend new policies and procedures affecting transfer students to the institution's administration.
7. Coordinate transfer functions on the campus with the admissions, registrar, student activities, counseling, orientation, housing, financial aid, academic advising, and placement offices.
8. Serve as an advocate for transfer students on the campus.
9. Serve as the focus of communication with officials at the sending institution.

Some smaller campuses, of course, cannot establish a separate transfer student office, but they can adopt many of these suggestions in their efforts to improve their articulation with sending institutions. Articulation is a continuous process. It needs frequent attention and careful evaluation if it is going to meet the needs of students. Articulation is the heart of the transfer process, and strong leadership is needed for it to become and remain effective.

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CHAPTER IV

Academic Advising

Academic advising is one of the most important services any campus offers to its students. It is not only crucial to the academic success of students, but also has implications for career development, student-faculty relationships, amount of time spent in college, student attitudes toward the institution, graduate and professional school plans, and ability to transfer. It is especially critical for transfer students who spend a relatively short period of time at any one institution. Inadequate academic advising for transfer students can mean lost time, money, and academic credits. It may also mean a loss of confidence in the institution and a strong sense of frustration on the part of some students. Academic advising for transfer students is an area that needs special attention, and the purposes of this chapter are to describe some of the current problems in academic advising for transfer students and to suggest some alternative actions that institutions can take to improve their academic advising services. "Academic advising" is meant to include the information, insights, and counsel provided by faculty to students concerning course selection, choice of major field, and evaluation of academic credits. As it is used here, this term does not include career planning or psychological counseling which are specialized student personnel functions and will be discussed later.

Academic Advising Problems of Transfer Students

Knoell and Medsker (1965) indicate that transfer students have had unsatisfactory experiences with their faculty advisers. Houmes (1973) found that transfer students in his study identified "advisement" as their number one concern as they entered their new institution. Many transfer students find that their faculty advisers are not well informed about the programs offered at the pre-transfer institution, and this can lead to misunderstandings and some credits not being accepted or evaluated fairly. Moreover, some faculty advisers may feel that the quality of academic work taken at community colleges is inferior to what these students would have received at the four-year institution, and this feeling is sometimes reflected in the evaluation of credits, the determination of future requirements, and the attitudes these faculty transmit to the transfer students.

Academic advising is usually a serious problem (in the minds of undergraduates) for all students since many faculty at four-year institutions are likely to have their priorities elsewhere. While there are large numbers of faculty who do an excellent job of assisting their advisees, many faculty are simply assigned far too many advisees and cannot give each student the time and attention he or she needs. Moreover there are a few faculty on every campus who are clearly not interested in academic advising and in the needs of the undergraduates and students, especially those who transfer into the institution may have real difficulties.

Many transfer students complain that their faculty advisers "handle" them in a very impersonal manner, implying that the only matter of concern in the process is to "sign up for the right courses," which should be determined by the individual student. Too often, even new transfer students may find that their "academic advising" consists of being handed an instruction sheet and a set of forms by a secretary, and then having to "fend for themselves." Although most transfer students survive such ordeals, the quality of their programs may suffer. They may miss some excellent educational opportunities and their attitude toward the institution and toward their academic program may become one of real cynicism.

Despite this rather gloomy picture, some transfer students find that their academic advisers are enthusiastic, knowledgeable, and available to assist them. Often, the academic adviser serves as the most important "official" at the new institution and is sought out for assistance on a wide variety of matters. Such dedicated faculty can personalize the academic experience for transfer students by showing that they care and are willing to take adequate time to listen and discuss problems with students. Often, they can make the difference between a positive and a negative experience at the institution for students.

Some transfer students complain that their faculty advisers are rarely available for consultation. It is true that some faculty who serve as advisers to students post "office hours" which total two per week, and for several years, such matters have been the subject of much

humor and cynicism among students. Many times, however, students themselves are to blame for the lack of effective advising they receive since they do not bother to visit with their advisers or think that they can simply "stop by" any time and find their adviser in his/her office. Many transfer students complain that "no one at the institution even knows my name," and they may be correct. However, in many cases, students themselves do not take advantage of the opportunities to get to know their advisers.

Transfer students who enter into four-year universities after attending community colleges often report that they used the advising services at the two-year college more often than at the four-year school (Cross, 1968). They also report that they feel the quality of academic advising was better at the community college than at the university.

On some campuses, transfer students may get the impression that "in order to get academic advising," there must be something "wrong." They may confuse campus psychological and counseling services with academic advising and shy away from a visit. Transfer students may not have received effective orientation to the available services on the campus and may not even know about various opportunities. As a result, some transfers either get insufficient information or learn about certain requirements and opportunities at the wrong time -- which may result in a graduation delay or loss of credits.

Many transfer students are undecided about their choices of major at the time they enter the new institution, and others change their

majors after they are enrolled. If such students do not receive accurate and timely advice from faculty, they may make poorly informed decisions about their own careers and future academic work. They may also spend more time (and money) than needed, taking courses that do not directly apply to their goals.

One of the most serious problems transfer students may encounter in academic advising is contact with faculty advisers who are well meaning, but rather narrow in the scope of their knowledge about university programs. A chemistry professor can be of great assistance to students interested in that field and in other physical sciences, but it is rare that the same faculty adviser can speak with much confidence or knowledge of the requirements in the social and behavioral sciences. Many large four-year universities have more than 50 separate academic departments, and such an arrangement can be bewildering not only to new transfer students but also to faculty. Students are often referred by their advisers to faculty in other areas but students do not move through the bureaucracy very easily in most cases and are too likely to let the matter drop. In a large and impersonal university, many transfer students become frustrated when their problems and concerns are dealt with on a piecemeal and technical basis. They may have to run from one end of the campus to another because, in the complexity of the institution, no one person or office can really meet all their needs. Their frustration may result in negative attitudes, confused course schedules, and uninformed career choices.

In the absence of well developed and enforced articulation agreements, transfer students may find some inconsistency in the manner in which their previous college work is evaluated. Attitudes of professors and departments toward transfer students and the quality of their previous work may vary considerably within the same institution, and at times, new transfer students are subjected to rather arbitrary evaluation. Despite wide spread publicity now at most four-year colleges, many transfer students are not aware at time of entry that their "letter" grades will not become part of their new institutional average. Moreover, some professors are openly skeptical about the grades transfer students have received (especially at community colleges) and have difficulty in assessing accurately the academic level of work achieved by the student. The increasing development of non-traditional studies and different grading concepts in innovative two-year institutions serve to compound this problem. Students at such two-year colleges may find much less flexibility at the four-year campus in academic programs and may encounter faculty who are not enthusiastic about the non-traditional or experimental curriculum taken previously.

Transfer students who are very sure about their professional and academic plans usually have few problems in academic advising. Most of them accept the requirements of their major field and concentrate their activity in that direction. Often, the institution accepts this situation, and doesn't bother these students. Most academic advising is extremely passive on the part of institutions -- not much is done unless action is initiated by the student. Many transfer students may

conclude (with some accuracy) that the college must not think this function is very important since advisers never seem to initiate anything except the publication of "critical dates" for the next term's registration process. Few transfer students see academic advising as anything more than the mechanical process of completing a course schedule. Students who are undecided about their major field or who find they cannot cope with the requirements in their chosen field and must change majors are however, very numerous and in critical need of good advice. These students usually have the most to lose with the current state of academic advising.

Some Alternatives

Most four-year institutions still conduct their academic advising programs under an old model which doesn't work very well in a large and complex university. This system assigns a number (often a large number) of advisees to an individual faculty member in a department. It is presumed that these students will major in this course of study, despite years of evidence that over 50 percent of undergraduates change their majors at least once. Most faculty have other priorities or simply do not have sufficient time for academic advising. Even the most sincere among them cannot know all the requirements in areas outside their department. While this model of academic advising might have worked at a smaller and more homogeneous institution, it is no longer effective.

Most new transfer students could benefit from an "academic advising center," staffed by persons available from 9:00 to 5:00 each day and

specifically trained to know all the requirements and to be sensitive to the students as individuals. Once a transfer student visited the office, an accurate record could be kept of his or her goals, requirements, and concerns, and regular contacts could be developed. The center would not be part of any department. As students changed majors, they would not be shuffled from one department to another, but would continue to work with the same professional staff member at the center. The information transfer students would receive at the center would be dependable, accurate, and enforceable university wide. Thus students could receive the individualized attention that so often seems lacking on today's campus. Some very important advising responsibilities would remain with faculty, although they would be relieved of some of the drudgery of academic advising. An academic advising center can provide career counseling and class schedules, but students frequently might be referred to individual professors to discuss academic problems, issues, and opportunities in a specific field. A good academic advising center cannot operate without this faculty help and support and therefore must work in cooperation with academic departments and faculty. The center can relieve faculty of the burden of much of the paperwork of advising and at the same time can encourage both faculty and students to meet together to discuss the goals and the preparation needed for a particular field of study.

The idea of an academic advising center, even for transfer students, is not new. There is reluctance on the part of many faculty to create such a center, and for that reason, not very many effective university

wide centers exist at four-year institutions. An extension of the program at such a center can be peer advising, implemented by undergraduates selected and trained to work as paraprofessionals with their fellow students. Where such programs include careful planning, supervision, and evaluation, new students can benefit a great deal. Without proper guidance, peer advising programs can do more harm than good with inaccurate and uninformed advice.

A center for academic advising can also enhance and increase the amount and quality of coordination with other university service agencies for students, such as financial aid, admissions, and career planning. Currently, too few faculty members are well enough informed or concerned about these services to be of much assistance to their advisees. If an academic advising center can be physically located adjacent to such services, the probability of coordinated and effective delivery to students is further enhanced.

Joseph Katz conducted a longitudinal study of student development during the 1960's at Berkeley and Stanford (Katz, 1969), and a part of the study was a series of student interviews which could have significant implications for the development of effective academic advising programs. Katz and his associates carried out eight structured, individual interviews with students over a four year period on the following topics: (1) the transition from home and high school to college, (2) parents and upbringing at home, (3) the use of summer, (4) the student's moral, religious and political values, (5) his other academic experiences, (6) peer relations and sexual development,

(7) self concept and perception of change in one's self, and

(8) a final assessment of the college years and the special experience of being interviewed.

The intended purpose of these interviews was to learn more about how student development took place regarding academics, attitudes, and personal growth. Although a significant amount of valuable information was gained in this regard, perhaps the most striking result was an unanticipated one: over three-fourths of the students participating in the series of eight interviews said that the experience itself was the most worthwhile thing that happened to them in college! The students got to know the research staff, and members of the research staff showed concern for the students over a period of four years and got to know them well. It should be reemphasized that the total length of time spent in these interviews over a four year period was only eight hours. Undoubtedly the reasons for its success were the personalized nature of the sessions, the regular follow-up by familiar staff, the pertinent content of the interviews themselves, and, of course, the "Hawthorne Effect" of participating in an experiment.

Katz's work provides considerable encouragement to new programs in undergraduate student academic advising. There is no reason that a college, an individual academic department, or an academic advising center could not attempt essentially the same thing that Katz and his associates did. Twice per year, students would be asked to meet individually with a team of three staff members -- one of which might be a faculty member, one a member of the student counseling service, and one an upperclass peer adviser. Planned interviews would be conducted, and regular follow up

would take place. In this manner, the academic advising process is not left to chance and does not become isolated from other aspects of the institution. Various components of Katz' interviews could be adapted to meet the particular needs of the agency conducting the program. Although such a program can be time consuming and costly, it can pay rich dividends in positive student-faculty relationships, student attitudes toward the institution, and more effective student decision-making. Furthermore, it represents an active and positive role on the part of the institution in an area that is too often characterized by confusion and apathy.

Efforts to create academic advising centers or new models of faculty-student interaction cannot succeed without strong leadership and administrative support. One of the primary reasons current academic advising services do not work well for undergraduates is that faculty are not rewarded in any tangible way for performing such services, and students suffer in the process. Where individual academic departments have made a strong commitment to undergraduate academic advising, the results are clearly visible. They are also well known among the students themselves, who quickly learn on any campus which departments are willing to take some time to listen to their concerns.

Although institutional studies of academic advising can be very worthwhile, most campuses already know the actual problems they need to address in this area. Too often, "another study" is conducted which simply diverts attention or delays some real action for a year or two. Effective leadership is the crucial factor in improving academic

advising programs, and it must be exercised with considerable skill since traditional faculty roles and perogatives may have to be changed. The need for improved academic advising programs for undergraduate students has been critical for many years. Now that large numbers of new transfer students are coming to four-year campuses, the problems have become more complex, and the need for effective academic advising services has become even greater.

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CHAPTER V

Admissions

With the tremendous growth of the community colleges in the United States and the increased mobility of college students from institution to institution, the problem of the admission of transfer students has become an important concern. Increased attention has been directed at establishing appropriate criteria for admissions, the role of the admissions officer has been reexamined, and the evaluation of academic credit earned at sending institutions has been carefully scrutinized. The admissions process for transfer students has become a specialized function, with professional staff devoting most or all of their time to it. Following are discussions of some of the specific problems associated with transfer student admissions.

Criteria

While generally the criteria used for predicting academic success in any institution are similar for freshmen and transfer students, some peculiar problems exist for transfers. There is significant variation in the academic quality of the sending institutions, and this fact must be taken into account by the admissions office. While there have been successful attempts to develop specific articulation agreements such as parallel course descriptions between two-year and four-year institutions, not enough has been done to monitor the academic performance of students from one institution to another so that useful information about academic

success can be compiled and can be used in the admissions decision making process. Previous grade point average has long been the best predictor of academic success for new freshmen, and this is also the case for new transfers. However, the admissions process is often made more difficult for the admissions officer and the transfer applicant when there are large numbers of transfers desiring entrance into an upper division program that has a numerical quota. In such cases, transfer students are often required to have higher grade point averages than native students in order to be admitted. This information is not always well known or understood by transfer students or by faculty, counselors, or admissions staff at sending institutions, and it can result in bitterness and resentment upon rejection. Efforts should be made by receiving institutions to develop specific policies in this area, and to disseminate them widely.

Usually a broad variety of test information is available to the admissions officer. Most of the test data reflect the aptitude and/or achievement test batteries taken during the last two years of high school or during the first year of college. Transfer students frequently resist being tested immediately following transfer since many of them view the testing process as repetitive and unnecessary. In those institutions where there are quotas or other enrollment restrictions on transfer students, local aptitude and achievement tests are developed according to the needs of the specific academic discipline in which the student is interested. For example, in some institutions a certain level of proficiency on a writing sample is required for admission to communication disciplines. There is a great deal of variation in the degree of

importance receiving institutions assign to aptitude and achievement tests in the admissions process. Transfer students and officials at sending institutions need to know well in advance the kinds of testing that will be required for admission. Further, they deserve to know the importance attached to the tests in the admissions decision, and how well those tests actually predict later academic success. Tests should never be used simply because they are used for freshmen (as is sometimes the case) or merely as an excuse for rejecting a student who is not wanted for other reasons.

Some institutions enrolling transfer students require an on-site interview with a committee of faculty and administrators. This is particularly true in the professional schools where there are large numbers of applicants competing for a small number of positions. Usually these interviews are conducted after several screenings of applicants have been completed. Although an accurate quantitative assessment of the personal interview is difficult to make, many institutions feel that a better admissions decision can be made by personally inquiring into the student's motivation, interests, commitment to the discipline, and life goals. In some professional schools and upper division programs, transfer students may feel that they are at a disadvantage in competing with native students who may be well known to the interviewers. Where interviews are required, transfer applicants and officials at the sending institutions need to know the importance attached to the interviews in the admissions decision and whether the receiving institution gives preference to its already enrolled students.

Role of the Transfer Admissions Officer

While freshmen generally apply for admission at the beginning of the traditional academic year, transfer students apply and enroll throughout the academic year. This situation demands a trained admissions officer who is closely acquainted with transfer student problems and with the needs, requirements, and problems of academic departments on the campus. Not all institutions are equally flexible in their ability or willingness to accept transfer students during off-terms or semesters. Transfer applicants and officials at sending institutions need to be informed of policies in this area. Many institutions have found it necessary to create a separate section in the admissions office for transfer students.

Many transfer student admissions officers travel throughout a regional area, becoming personally acquainted with community college counselors, advisors, students, and faculty. Careful articulation between these admissions officers and the sending institutions can enhance relationships and improve the planning and application process for students wishing to transfer. The information gained from these trips and meetings can assist the specialist in credit evaluation in the admissions office and, at the same time, alert the transfer student to those courses that are needed in order to receive credit for academic work that will transfer from one institution to the other. The effective transfer admissions officer should be able to provide accurate information about academic requirements and about other aspects of campus life as well. Undergraduate transfers do not select their new institution

only for academic reasons. The transfer admissions officer should be able to speak knowledgeably about campus social life, housing, athletics and intramurals, finances, medical services, student organizations, religious groups, and the community itself. If the transfer admissions officer understands the special ways in which such matters affect new transfer students, his or her effectiveness will be enhanced. Many such officers find that they can improve their services by having enrolled transfer students accompany them on their trips to various sending institutions. This can not only personalize the process, but it can also augment the information that is provided.

Because transfer students often complete their studies at the sending institution and enroll for classes at the receiving institution at about the same time, on-site evaluations of previous academic work at orientation and registration become necessary. Admissions officers that have responsibility for working with transfer students need to take a leadership role in making the receiving institution flexible enough to enroll these new students on such short notice. Competent credit evaluation specialists need to be available and need to have sufficient authority to make decisions for new transfer students. Many adjustments must be made if the receiving institution is going to accommodate these new transfer "walk-ons." Besides the evaluation of academic credit that needs to be done, information about financial aid programs and student housing is crucial during this time. Too many transfer students find themselves ineligible for some campus services and programs the first semester because the institution has

not yet adjusted its procedures to meet the enrollment patterns of transfer students.

On many campuses a follow-up conference is held during each academic year. Admission officers from the receiving institution and academic advisors and counselors from sending institutions are invited to meet with transfer students. The feedback from these students to both institutions can be very helpful in assisting prospective students in the transfer process. Studies of the academic performance of the transfer students are provided to the sending institutions, giving them the opportunity to determine how well their students do after transfer. Discussions between transfer students and sending institutions can often result in the changing of course requirements and in improved services. In the NASPA study conducted by the authors, a number of administrators commented on the need for such conferences. For example, one director of admissions said, "The utmost need is for a continuing dialogue between admissions counselors of two and four-year institutions so that the potential transfer student is fully aware of his standing in the respective institution; dialogue meaning conferences, mutual campus visits, and exchange of information and programs on a regular basis." (Sandeen and Goodale, 1972, pp. 179-200)

The enrollment of large numbers of transfer students in higher education has introduced some special problems for admissions offices and has tested the flexibility of a number of institutions and their willingness to adapt their academic programs and student services to meet the needs of these students. Where careful attention has been

paid to these problems and where admissions officers have made special efforts to inform themselves and others about what needs to be done, the admissions process for new transfer students has become significantly improved. Transfer students do not fit neatly into traditional patterns of enrollment, and programs and services for this new clientele must continuously be evaluated.

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CHAPTER VI

Student Services

Among the various student services offered by institutions in their efforts to assist undergraduates are housing, financial aid, counseling and career development, orientation, and student life and activities programs. In many instances, transfer students have not had equal accessability to these services, due largely to the fact that receiving institutions have not paid adequate attention to their needs.

In this chapter, each of these services is described, with an emphasis placed on ways in which each service can be made more effective for the increasing numbers of transfer students.

Student Housing

As educational costs have increased in recent years, some institutions have phased out some of their residence halls and other new colleges and universities simply have not built them, leaving matters of housing to the students themselves. Especially during the 1960's, when dormitory rules for students were liberalized on many campuses and student unrest was common, residence halls were viewed as an unnecessary irritation by some institutions who came to feel that the problems greatly outnumbered the benefits. Students encouraged this situation on some campuses, since they wanted to be relieved of on-campus living requirements in order to move off-campus into apartments where they could be free from institutional restrictions. In some states, new

institutions were not allowed to use public monies to build residence halls. Very few community colleges have entered the on-campus housing business since most of their students live at home or find housing on their own. Most of the new urban institutions have also avoided building residence halls in the past few years. There have been serious economic barrieres that have prevented these facilities from being built, but there has also been a strong reluctance on the part of institutions to build new dormitories since many administrators, board members, students, and legislators have become skeptical about their educational value. Indeed, there have been several legal challenges by students during the past five years regarding the right of institutions to require freshmen and other students to live in dormitories. Although the courts so far have upheld the institutions in their claims that living in residence halls has a positive educational value, there may be some indication that the courts are becoming more skeptical of such claims (Chronicle of Higher Education, 1974).

On campus housing programs have had strong proponents for many years and there have been many lively debates in recent years on campuses about the value of dormitory living. It is perhaps ironic to note in 1976 that there has been a student led return to on-campus housing, despite all the objections and problems previously stated. Many of the personal restrictions have been removed and on many campuses, it is considerably more economical (and sometimes safer) to live in university housing than in privately owned apartments off campus. Some students have also claimed that they feel more a part of campus life when living on campus and have returned for that reason.

Alexander Astin (1973) studied students at 213 institutions in an effort to assess the impact of dormitory living on students, and his results may lead some academic administrators, legislators, and others to reexamine their points of view and their policies regarding housing. He found that dormitory residents were less likely (than commuters) to drop out and more likely to attain the baccalaureate in four years, to apply for admission to graduate school, and to earn a high grade point average. He also reported that living in a dormitory increased the chances that students would be satisfied with their overall undergraduate experience, particularly in the area of interpersonal contacts with faculty and other students. In his discussion of what decisions should be made regarding on-campus housing policy, Astin questioned institutions that viewed dormitory living as having no value.

Arthur Chickering (1974) has reported the results of his extensive research concerning commuting versus resident students. He noted that the trend toward eliminating residence halls and establishing more commuter institutions has been growing. He argued on the basis of his findings that commuting students do not learn as much, develop as fast, or remain as long in college as do students who live on campus. He showed that resident students bring to college higher achievements, broader interests, and more money; commuting students are generally less able, less experienced, and less well off financially. Thus, the two groups enter college as the "haves" and "have nots" and the college years only widen the gap between them. He suggested that institutions should make some residence on campus a part of the educational program

for all students and also make adjustments in orientation, admissions, curriculum and teaching.

Both Astin's and Chickering's studies have attracted a good deal of attention in the past year, and it is likely that many institutions may reassess their policies and programs in student housing as a result. Transfer students, who frequently either commute or live off-campus, may require special attention. Housing for them can be especially important. They have a fairly short period of time to spend at their new institution, and if they move into an apartment off campus, the chances are not very good that they will meet many other students quickly or become part of campus life easily. Although most transfer students do not want to be included in programs for freshmen, they do have the same kinds of social needs. Too often, however, transfer students are not given as high a priority as new freshmen for on-campus housing, and many times they are forced off campus. At other times, they may be assigned rooms in residence halls with new freshmen, and, rightly or wrongly, this may be viewed as unsatisfactory.

On most campuses, living in residence halls provides easier and more frequent access to various services, such as academic advising, career planning, intramural sports, financial aid, and counseling. Many transfer students are not aware of the services and programs available to them at their institution, and a principal reason is that their only real contact with the institution is in the classroom. Living on campus, even if for only the first three or four months, could increase the likelihood that transfer students would use the various available services.

Most residence halls employ undergraduate student assistants to work with the residents, and these junior staff members are often very effective in helping new students learn about the institution. Many colleges and universities have found that it is very helpful to include some experienced transfer students on these residence hall student assistant staffs since new transfer students seem to be able to identify with them and to benefit from their advice and friendship.

Residence halls can provide a lively variety of social, educational, and cultural activities for the residents, and these informal programs can help new transfer students become a part of campus life. Frequently transfer students do not feel a strong identity with their new campus, but the opportunity to participate in student programs and to gain some form of recognition could contribute toward their success.

Orientation programs for transfer students can be enhanced by providing opportunities for them to live in a residence hall during their one or two day visit to the campus. Quite often, such an experience may stimulate them to live on campus when they actually enroll, and may also be of real value in helping them learn first hand what residence hall living is like.

Some new transfer students, of course, do not want to live in on-campus housing facilities. Although most institutions have found that little is gained from forcing students to live in residence halls, they may want to explore other more limited alternatives, if they accept the benefits of housing as described earlier by Astin and Chickering. Cooperative living centers, international houses, language dorms, honors houses, and short-term (4-10 weeks) living arrangements can be offered

with positive results. If institutions are committed to making the experience for transfer students as personal and beneficial as possible, they should be willing to experiment with new programs, including new housing arrangements.

Student Financial Aid

The opportunity to participate in financial aids programs is crucial for transfer students. However many four-year institutions have concentrated for so long on the needs of freshmen students that transfers find themselves at a serious disadvantage.

First there may be dramatic cost differences between institutions especially for a student who has been living at home and then transfers to a four-year residential campus. In addition, students who have not received adequate information about the actual cost of attending the new institution may suffer a form of "financial shock" when they discover not only that their new institution may be more expensive than they had anticipated but also that it may be very difficult for them to qualify for financial aid.

Students who have not been adequately counseled by either the sending or the receiving institution may be surprised and discouraged to learn that they must assume large loan obligations in their financial aid "packages." Even those students who obtained loans previously may be unprepared for the situation at the new institution. If a student at his/her first institution obtained a National Direct Student Loan, participated in the College Work-Study Program, the Basic Opportunity Grants Program, or the supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants

Program, he/she may incorrectly assume that he/she automatically will continue on these programs at the new institution. Efforts should be made on the part of the financial aid staff at both institutions to inform students that this is not the case. Students may receive priority in consideration for these programs after transfer, but in the case of the National Direct Student Loan Program, for example, they will have to apply for a new loan. Obviously accurate and well timed information about financial aid should be provided to transfer students before they enroll at the new campus.

Transfer students are however not only inadequately informed. They are also too often unfairly disqualified from many financial aid programs. Transfer students enroll at institutions throughout the year. This is especially true of those transfers who have attended community colleges, but at many institutions financial aid is available primarily at the opening of the regular academic year -- in the fall. If equal opportunity is to be afforded to transfer students, institutions must plan financial aid programs so that assistance is available to those new transfer students who enroll later in the academic year.

The inclination on the part of many institutions to plan financial aid programs on the basis of the needs of the fall enrollee has been only partially the result of years of experience with the traditional non-transfer student. There has been in recent years a natural tendency on the part of many institutions to commit most or all of federal financial aid monies by October because of the under-funding of most of

these programs. Thus transfer students who may enter the institution later do not have an equal opportunity to participate in these programs.

Some institutions that have extensive scholarship aid for academically talented students have traditionally made it available primarily or only to new freshmen students. If there are significant numbers of new transfer students. This might provide not only deserved recognition for these students but also encouragement to the more academically talented transfer students to apply to the institution. While many institutions are making scholarship aid available to new transfers, some do not give equitable attention to this area.

Transfer students seeking financial aid frequently encounter unexpected problems in seeking employment. Many community college students attend colleges located in urban areas where the availability of jobs in the community may be much more extensive than it is in some four-year campus communities, especially those not located in cities. Financial aid and admissions staff should provide reliable employment information to personnel at pre-transfer institutions.

The sending institution might also prepare transfer students to deal with the more impersonal attitude of many larger campuses. At many community colleges, students are able to walk into a student financial aid office and have a financial aid officer put together a package on the spot, or at least in a relatively short period of time. At a more traditional four-year campus, where there may be a more complex financial aid process, the student may not be prepared for the comparatively long wait that he or she may have before obtaining a final

answer about a financial aid package. Accurate information needs to be provided at the pre-transfer institution about this situation.

An institution could benefit from studying the attitudes of its transfer students toward the financial aid process and their participation in financial aid programs as compared to native students. There may be significant barriers in the attitudes that students perceive regarding their opportunities for financial aid at the institution. Studies of this kind can be revealing to an institution in its efforts to serve transfer students more effectively.

The primary problems with student financial aid programs for transfer students involve inadequate communications, low priority attitudes toward transfer students, and inadequate planning on the part of financial aid counselors and admissions staff. The number of transfer students will probably continue to grow at a faster rate than the number of new freshmen students, and institutions need to reevaluate their programs, policies, and services in financial aid programs in light of projected enrollment figures. If adequate recognition and priority are given to the needs of transfer students, the institution and its transfer students will benefit significantly and will move closer to the goal of providing equal financial aid opportunities for all persons.

Counseling and Career Development Services

For purposes of this discussion, "counseling and career development services" is meant to include placement, career planning, and personal counseling. It is intended to be separate from academic advising, which was discussed in an earlier chapter in more detail.

As the employment market tightens and the number of college graduates continues to grow, the role of personal counseling and career planning becomes more important. While many undergraduates are currently very worried about their chances of finding a job upon graduation, others are perplexed about what to do with their lives and frustrated with their inability to decide upon a specific career objective. These very personal situations can greatly affect the academic performance of students and can also influence their views of the institution. If students view the institution as an impersonal mechanism it is not likely that they will explore several career alternatives or that they will evaluate their own abilities and motivations for a career with trained personnel. Large numbers of students change their majors as undergraduates, and many seniors express sincere regret at graduation time that they were not aware earlier of the many services and academic options that were available to them. Many times a change in major does not mean that a clear and enthusiastic commitment has been made to a specific field so much as it may mean a rejection of another. Many students graduate in fields about which they express little enthusiasm. Some of them simply wanted a degree or wanted to get out because they were tired of school and majored in an area that offered the least resistance and the fewest hurdles. Too many students spend their undergraduate years in this manner, and of course the waste of money, time, and human resources in considerable. Undergraduates often make decisions about their professional futures based upon very unrealistic notions or upon the basis of perceived pressure from family members. Others decide to forge ahead in a major unsuited to their abilities despite

the best advice and information that can be made available to them. There is a stubborn reluctance on the part of some undergraduates to accept a realistic evaluation of themselves and their fitness for a particular career. These students are difficult to approach and usually are headed for difficult times academically.

Many institutions do not recognize the seriousness of these situations for students. Deciding what to do with one's life is often a very emotionally draining experience, and most undergraduates could benefit from professional advice and information over a period of time. Usually, however, students are left to themselves to make these decisions, and as a consequence they do not use the best information and advice available to them.

Although these problems of career choice are in part the concern of an advising service as was discussed above, there are additional ways for institutions to develop effective programs for undergraduates concerning career development.

The placement office can work cooperatively with individual academic departments in creating "career information packages" for students to use to learn not only about the academic nature of a department and its personnel, location, and purpose, but also the career opportunities in that field. These "packages" can be self-operated slide and tape shows, video-cassettes, or informal brochures that are made available to students. A library of such materials can be transported easily to residence halls, the student union, or other places convenient for students. Special "packages" can be developed for transfer students as an introduction to career development services.

One of the most effective and most personal ways an institution can assist its students in career development is to hold regular "career exploration groups" especially for freshmen, sophomores, and new transfers. Faculty members and staff from the placement office can meet with groups of 10-12 students in efforts to help them examine various academic and career alternatives in a non-threatening manner. Especially with young students who have more than two years remaining in their undergraduate programs, these experiences can lead to positive and more realistic career decisions. They can also serve to enhance the undergraduate educational experience for students by giving it a clearer focus and by personalizing the institution for the student.

Some transfer students do not become aware of cooperative educational experiences until they are about to graduate. Many of them could benefit from a semester or two working in business, government, or industry in cooperation with their educational institution. Colleges that offer cooperative educational programs for their students might benefit their new transfer students considerably by publicizing these opportunities at the time of admission. Many co-op students have found that their off campus working experience has been of great value to them in learning more about themselves, their professional field, and their suitability to it.

Some institutions unconsciously give undergraduates the impression that the selection of an academic major locks them into a life long and irreversible career mold. Some students may feel that once they have graduated in a particular field they are, by necessity, committed to it

for a long time. Of course, quite the opposite is true. If an institution studies the career patterns of its graduates for even short periods of time (such as five years after graduation) it will probably find that substantial portions of its students are engaged in employment largely unrelated to their undergraduate majors. Having such information available can improve the ability of advisers to assist undergraduates more effectively and can provide some healthy perspective on these decisions for the students.

Counseling and career development services do not usually have a significant impact upon undergraduates. If the thrust of these services is primarily problem oriented, students think that there has to be something wrong before they use these services. This negative perception is not uncommon and is difficult to turn around. Students may tend to stay away from the counseling office simply to avoid the stigma that they feel may be attached to them as a result. However, positive efforts to reach out to students with programs such as those described above can open up very good opportunities for additional contacts. Some institutions, feeling that these matters are too important to remain voluntary, have built career development services into the curriculum for new students. Transfer students should not be ignored in such efforts since it is very likely that their needs are at least as important as those of new freshmen. The previous experiences of transfer students with counseling and career development services are very diverse and the receiving institution should not assume that transfer students have had adequate counseling. Early contact with new transfers is important so that an

accurate assessment of their needs can be determined. In this manner institutions can not only serve the educational needs of their transfer students effectively, but they can make real progress in personalizing their programs to students.

Orientation

While the orientation of new students to colleges and universities is as old as American higher education itself, the development of special programs to acquaint new transfer students with the receiving institution is relatively new. Knoell and Medsker (1965) evaluated transfer students' reactions to orientation programs and reported they were viewed as largely unsuccessful. In most instances new transfers have been grouped with new freshmen with the incorrect assumption that the needs of both groups could be served in a common program. Often these programs have been offered prior to the opening of classes in September when many transfer students were still employed, endeavoring to earn money for college and university expenses. Many transfer students, being older, are married and would benefit from an orientation program which would include their spouses. There has been general agreement in recent years among the transfer students who have participated in orientation programs that they have been unsatisfactory.

Content of the Program

The fact that transfer students are most interested in course selection, in careful evaluation of their credits, in finding a place to live, and in financing their education requires that a special orientation program be planned for them. A program should be planned

which would allow the transfer student to get the most accurate and up-to-date evaluation of their academic credits that is available. Assistance in the planning of their academic program at the receiving institution should also be provided. One or two persons from each academic discipline should be specifically trained to work with transfer students in giving adequate academic advice and counseling during orientation.

Those who schedule orientation programs for transfer students must take into account the fact that they enroll throughout the academic year. When transfer students enroll for the "off terms," it is advisable to have at least group counseling and advising sessions on academic matters, if one-to-one counseling opportunities are not available. Many institutions have prospective transfer students come to a one-day orientation program in the spring term preceeding the student's fall enrollment. At this time they are able to pre-enroll and register at the same time. The most popular programs are those sessions planned in the summer which allow the students more time and resources to build their academic programs. While specific academic matters must be attended to and housing and financial aid must be discussed, attention should also be given to social adjustment and to the involvement of transfer students in the life of the institution. Knoell and Medsker (1965) found that many transfers who had been student leaders at their previous institutions became almost totally inactive after transfer when they could not find opportunities for which they did not have to compete with freshmen. On the whole, transfer students have tended to

identify less with the four-year institution than have their native classmates in the upper division. Often, student organizations and student life activities can be highlighted with the use of enrolled transfer students as orientation assistants to enlighten and enhance the role of the transfer student in the life of the receiving institution. The use of transfer students in planning and conducting orientation programs can be most helpful and advantageous to the prospective transfer student.

Some Current Efforts

At a large midwestern university, a transfer orientation program has been developed which, prior to registration, allows the transfer student to meet with the representative of the general education program. Persons from that program explain basic requirements, how credits are evaluated, and arrange academic advising appointments. A special office in student affairs has been created to provide orientation services and programs which enable the students to begin classes with a minimum of difficulty. Another large urban institution offers a special orientation program of two days. Meetings are scheduled with academic administrators and other persons who interact with the new students during their early weeks at the university. The institution attempts to mix the transfer and native students from the very beginning so that the transfer student will not feel different from those who have been at the university since their freshmen year. The institution tries to make the student feel like a "regular member" of the student body and to lose his "transfer identity." Another institution

has enlisted the cooperation of students living in its residence halls in developing a special orientation program for transfer students. It has a special weekend for community college students who are giving consideration to transferring. The weekend includes free room and board in the residence halls for the prospective transfers and informal social events as well. The students have an opportunity to visit with department chairmen and tour departments in which they are interested. Another institution has established an "interest club" for those students who have transferred after several years away from college, where the absence has been because of raising a family, military service, or other reasons. Similar programs started at other schools have now evolved into well organized transfer student associations.

Although special orientation programs can be developed which meet the special needs of transfer students in academic advising, housing, financial aid, and other areas, it is very difficult to overcome the lack of enthusiasm some traditionally oriented faculty and administrators feel for transfer students. Transfer students can quickly perceive that they are not the "preferred student" on some campuses, and, of course, this can significantly affect their success and campus experience. Such prejudices against transfer students do exist, especially where there are large numbers of transfers, and these attitudes are difficult to change. Accurate data about previous academic performance and ability should be provided, and the institution's administration should develop a strong, public policy commitment to its transfer students. A university wide orientation committee should be established that includes transfer students to give greater visibility to these

students and their concerns. Some receiving institutions act as if they do not have transfer students and give them little or no recognition. An effective orientation program for transfer students must take into account these human factors as well as the more obvious academic and student service needs of the student.

Student Life and Activities

Transfer students arrive at the receiving institution with a diverse background of talents, skills, and interests. Although most articulation efforts to date have focused on academic coordination, there is a strong need to provide accurate information about student life and activities to new transfer students. Most receiving institutions leave such concerns to the students themselves and do not feel that there is any need to get involved in these matters. However, there is some evidence (Chickering, 1974) that indicates that increased student involvement in campus residential life and activities has positive educational value. A receiving institution that is committed to making the campus housing experience as worthwhile as possible for its transfer students should recognize the important role of student life and activities and make efforts to enhance these experiences for its students. Besides improving student morale and institutional identity, it is likely that fewer transfer students will feel unwanted at their new institution and will stay in school.

On most four-year campuses, the native students who enter the institution as freshmen dominate student leadership positions

and activities. It may be very difficult for new transfer students to "break into" the system that has been controlled by the native students for so long. This can result in some real bitterness and frustration, especially for those new transfers who had been significantly involved in campus activities at their previous institutions.

The receiving institution, through its student services staff, can provide encouragement to new transfer students by informing them well in advance of their actual enrollment about student organizations, athletics, religious groups, drama and debate groups, and interest clubs. The staff can arrange "student activity open houses" for new transfer students early in their first semester. Many native students and the campus organizations with which they are affiliated will be happy to cooperate with such efforts and are eager themselves to recruit new students into their groups. Many times, existing student organizations simply are not aware that there are talented and interested transfer students who are anxious to get involved, and they will respond positively if asked. Some transfer students feel that their efforts to make the debate team, to get a part in a play, to run for the student senate, or to try out for the cheerleading team simply are not worth it, because by the time they were "accepted," it would be time for them to graduate. But when they are encouraged and when existing student groups are aware of their desires and talents, significant progress can be made.

Many students transfer from two-year colleges where they were involved as student government officers, newspaper editors, television and radio broadcasters, interest club officers, debaters, and athletes.

Such involvement means a great deal to large numbers of students, and transferring to a four-year institution should not bring such activities to a halt. In providing recognition and awards to graduating seniors and other students, receiving institutions should include student achievement at the sending institutions. Such recognition can do a great deal for student morale and can encourage other new transfer students to continue their patterns of involvement in their new institution.

On some campuses transfer students have been appointed to university committees and councils which directly affect their lives on the campus. Such committees as those concerned with academic advising, student financial aid, career planning and placement, admissions, housing, orientation, athletics, and parking and transportation address themselves to the special needs of transfer students. Transfer students can be urged to apply for such committees by placing advertisements in the student newspaper and by posting flyers and bulletins around the campus. Some campuses have created a university committee on transfer student affairs, composed of faculty and transfer students, whose role it is to recommend policies and programs for transfers. Such a committee can not only stimulate some excellent programs and ideas, but it can also give campus wide recognition to transfer student concerns and provide some important involvement in campus life for transfer students. It can also serve to educate more traditional faculty and administration about the real problems and concerns of transfer students and their roles in student life and activities.

Not until recently have fraternities and sororities focused their rushing programs on transfer students. Traditionally they have recruited only freshmen. More and more fraternities and sororities are becoming established on community college campuses and so the transfer affiliation from the community college chapter to the chapter at the university campus is becoming easier. National fraternities and sororities are now increasingly recognizing the benefits and contributions that transfer students can make to their programs.

Also of special note here are the intramural and recreational programs that are so popular on most campuses. These informal, leisure time activities of students, ranging from arts and crafts and chess tournaments to co-educational volleyball and racquetball often involve 75 percent of the student body. Besides being fun, these activities can help new transfer students meet other students and become involved in campus life.

Many transfer students have been commuter students and thus may not have had a close association with first institution. If the receiving institution feels that its overall educational program is enhanced by encouraging institutional identity and a spirit of collegility, then it will make efforts to involve new transfer students in campus life and activities. The alumni office may want to enhance such development by providing money for some special transfer student scholarships, or by creating a student alumni association that includes transfer students.

Much of the undergraduate experience in higher education is impersonal in nature. For transfer students, who usually spend only two years at the receiving institutions, the experience can be even more impersonal. In efforts to improve articulation and in programs developed for new transfer students, institutional leaders should concern themselves with student life and activities as well as with academic problems. By doing so, they can have a positive impact upon the undergraduate experience for many transfer students and can as well make the institution a more humane one.

References - Chapter VI

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CHAPTER VII

Recommendations for Institutional Action

The thesis of this book is that the presence of large numbers of transfer students on college and university campuses has significantly altered traditional student life and undergraduate education. The special needs and problems of these transfer students have been described and the comparative absence of effective educational programs and student services for them has been noted. Arguments have been presented for institutions to assign a higher priority to the needs of transfer students, whether in admissions and orientation or in counseling or academic advising. It is evident that transfer students are not given adequate attention by institutions of higher education, despite the fact that their rate of entry into four year institutions recently has been twice the rate of new freshmen.

The following are specific action recommendations for institutions to consider regarding transfer students. They emerge from the various problems and needs of transfer students themselves.

1. Institutional Policy

One of the most fundamental problems that can inhibit effective institutional programs for transfer students is the attitude of its faculty, administration, and native students toward transfer students. If the institution feels that transfer students are "second class citizens," it may have a difficult time establishing an effective climate for transfers. In conjunction with students, faculty, and

administration, a definitive policy and program regarding the institutional mission for transfer students should be developed.

2. Admissions

Written criteria for the admission of transfer students, not only on the campus, but also at pre-transfer institutions where there may be students who wish to attend, should be developed and distributed. More flexibility for transfer students than for freshmen may be needed in the admissions process, including deadline dates, necessary applicant information, and the application form itself. Regular, on-going contacts with personnel at community colleges and other institutions should be established. Testing policies should be examined to determine if they serve a needed function for new transfer students.

3. New Student Programs

Although some progress has been made in the past few years in providing special orientation programs for new transfer students, many institutions still give first priority to new freshmen. Because of more varied academic backgrounds, different social expectations, and work schedules, transfers may be unable or unwilling to participate in "regular" new student programs. Particularly evident is the fact that orientation programs for transfer students may fail to address the real questions these prospective students have on their minds: course selection, evaluation of academic credit, housing, and financial aid opportunities. These pragmatic questions too often may not get answered.

Specific orientation programs exclusively for transfer students that meet their needs and time schedules should be developed. Currently enrolled transfer students should be invited to help plan the programs and to participate as student-staff members. Provision should be made for on-site evaluation of transcripts by specifically trained academic and counseling staff, especially for late matriculants.

4. Registration

In the registration process, some institutions do not anticipate the problems of the transfer student who may enroll later than other students. "Limited enrollment programs" may not be accessible to these students, and even regular courses may be closed. Transfer students enroll throughout the academic year, and they often arrive too late for the program they had anticipated because sufficient information was not provided to them beforehand.

Class space in pertinent academic courses should be reserved for entering transfer students. Where possible, sufficient flexibility in courses of study should be developed so that transfers may begin their programs during any semester of the year.

5. Academic Advising

There is no more crucial problem than academic advising for the transfer student. If a careful assessment of previous academic work is not completed before the student enrolls at the new institution, and if there has not been effective communication regarding that student's program between the two institutions, the transfer student is likely to encounter serious academic problems and loss of time in reaching a graduation goal.

Faculty that can serve as knowledgeable and effective academic advisors to new transfer students should be available. These academic advisors need to be informed not only about the problems of transfer students, but also about the programs at the previous institutions the students have attended and about the wide range of academic choices available at the new institution. Released time and appropriate remuneration should be given to these academic advisors to work not only in the orientation program but also at other periods during the year with these new transfer students to insure a smooth transition to the new institution. Additionally, an institutional policy should be formulated with regard to advanced placement credit for transfer students.

6. Student Financial Aid

Some student financial aid programs are not available on an equal basis to transfer students because of the priority given to incoming freshmen. Scholarships are often available only to new freshmen students, despite the fact that transfer students may comprise half of the new students at the institution. Many transfer students may not qualify for financial aid programs because their date of acceptance does not conform to traditional financial aid deadlines. Sufficient information about financial aid may not be provided prior to transfer. There may also be some confusion about the possibility of continuing loan and grant programs from one institution to another.

Policies and programs should be developed that afford equal opportunity to transfer students to benefit from financial aid programs.

Certain amounts of student employment, loans, scholarship, and grant monies should be reserved for new transfer students. Effective information about student financial aid should be distributed to personnel and students at community colleges and other pre-transfer institutions.

7. Housing

Many institutions, in their on-campus housing policies, give first priority to new freshmen. In the process, transfer students may receive the least attractive housing or none at all. Again, because they may apply late, they may not have an equal chance to live on campus and become an active part of student life. Student assistants and residence hall advisory staff may not be aware of the background and special needs of transfers, many of whom have never lived in an on-campus housing setting previously. Where many or most transfer students may live off-campus, sufficient information about off-campus living may not be provided.

Policies and programs that insure equal opportunity for transfer students in housing facilities should be developed. Attention should be given to the special needs of transfer students who, because of age and previous college experience, may not find living in freshman housing satisfactory. Employment of transfer students in student-staff positions in housing should be considered. Information about off-campus housing should be made available on a year-around basis.

8. Student Activities

Some transfer students complain that they do not feel actively involved in the life of the institution and its activities of a

social, political, and recreational nature. Moreover, some transfers feel that they cannot compete with the native students, because of their later entry, for traditional campus leadership positions.

Student organizations should be encouraged to reserve places for transfer students in student government, intramurals, interest clubs, departmental clubs, honoraries, fraternities and sororities, and other student activities. Publications from these groups should note especially that transfer students are welcome.

9. Counseling and Career Development Services

Many transfers are not certain of the major they wish to pursue. Career exploration opportunities for transfers may either be lacking or non-existent. Recruiters are seldom aware of the diversity of backgrounds and attitudes of transfer students.

Career exploration groups should be established to assist transfer students who are unsure of their academic majors or professional goals. Efforts should be made to acquaint recruiters with the diversity of backgrounds of transfer students.

10. Publications

Most publications whether college catalogs, student handbooks, financial aid brochures, or descriptions of individual academic programs do not relate to transfer students. Although there may be a large number of transfer students on the campus, the publications may not reflect this sufficiently.

Publications that relate directly to the needs of transfer students should be developed. These publications should be distributed regularly

to other institutions and to prospective transfer applicants. Enrolled transfer students should be consulted in the development of these publications.

11. Office of Transfer Student Affairs

An Office of Transfer Student Affairs should be established that can serve effectively in an advocacy role for transfer students. An additional role for that office should be to work toward articulation agreements with other institutions in specific academic programs. Those regarding comparable course work need to be in writing and well publicized.

12. Committee on Transfer Student Affairs

An institutional committee on transfer student affairs, charged with the responsibility to advise the president with policies and programs for transfer students, should be appointed. Members of the committee should include transfer students, native students, faculty, and administration.

13. Articulation Agreements

Transfer students are frequently the victims of the lack of cooperation between and among various institutions. Where there have not been agreements specified in writing among and between institutions, transfer students often can be subject to arbitrary decisions made by admissions officers, faculty, and other officials.

Cooperation with various institutional representatives should lead to the development of policies and agreements in academic

articulation. Additional attention should be directed at areas such as student financial aid, new student programs, career planning, housing, and student activities.

The receiving institution should provide leadership in developing cooperative relationships with pre-transfer institutions by holding conferences on the campus and in other areas on a state and regional level, so that counselors, admissions officers, financial aid officers, academic advisors, faculty members, and transfer students themselves can meet to share their experiences and develop new programs and policies. Follow-up conferences should be held with transfer students during their first year of enrollment to learn more about their experiences at the new institution. Interviews with counselors and faculty members from the pre-transfer institutions should be held to understand more effectively the nature of transfer problems and to discuss cooperative solutions.

14. Special Academic Opportunities

Independent study, honors programs, and overseas study opportunities may not be as available to transfer students as they are to native students.

Recognition should be given to new transfer students for previous scholarly achievement, and opportunities for independent study, honors programs, undergraduate research fellowships, and overseas study should be extended to them. Policies restricting participation in these programs on the basis of residency requirements should be reviewed.

15. Participation in Institutional Governance

Transfer students may not have sufficient opportunity to participate on a regular basis on councils, committees, and task forces because of their later arrival on campus. If spaces are not allocated for transfer students, they may seldom be placed on committees or councils which deliberate on issues of concern to them.

Spaces for transfer students should be reserved on institutional committees, councils, and task forces. Special attention should be given to those groups which deliberate on issues and programs of concern to transfer students.

16. Recognition and Awards

Most institutions present awards to certain graduates and other outstanding students for various academic and extra-curricular accomplishments. Too many institutions do not recognize the merit of transfer student accomplishments at their previous institutions as part of their overall personal record.

Efforts should be made to determine the transfer student's previous achievements in academic and extra-curricular programs. Consideration should be given to the granting of awards and recognition based on the cumulative record of transfer students.

17. The Reverse Transfer

Another facet in the articulation problem between two and four year institutions is the "reverse transfer"--the student who transfers from

a four-year institution back to a two-year school. Many students transfer because of academic problems, while others do so because of a lack of personalization on the four-year campus.

Accurate data about students "transferring back" should be compiled on an on-going basis if the institution is to gain an understanding of these student problems. The receiving institution needs to develop policies and programs that encourage the retention of students.

18. Research

Despite some significant efforts in recent years to learn more about transfer students, most institutions have not studied their own transfer students. There is evidence to indicate that there are significant differences in socio-economic background, academic performance, and professional aspirations between transfer students and native students. Institutions could benefit significantly by paying close attention to these data.

In conjunction with the Office of Institutional Research or other interested faculty, research on transfer students should be conducted. Studies such as the perceptions transfers have of the educational environment or descriptions of differences that exist between transfer students and native students relative to economic background, academic ability, and professional aspirations should be conducted. This information should be shared with academic departments, student affairs offices, and others outside the institution.

These recommendations are not intended to be all-inclusive. Neither is it implied that all of them will fit the needs of every individual

institution. The special nature of private institutions, four-year institutions, graduate institutions, or two-year institutions may make some of these recommendations less critical than others. However, it is evident from the large numbers of students transferring from one institution to another that their needs are not being met very well. Significant attention should be paid to the development of programs and policies for transfer students. These recommendations, if implemented, can help to move institutions closer to meeting the needs of transfer students.